



For Immediate Release

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Survey Finds High Level of Tobacco Law Awareness in Santa Clara County

SAN JOSE, CA, August 3, 2007 - During the past two years, the Santa County Public Health Department, Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) has collaborated with facilities managers of public buildings in educating and assisting them with the implementation of Assembly Bill 846 (AB 846). AB 846 is a California state law that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of main entrances, exits and operable windows of all public buildings. The law also applies to all state, county and city government buildings. The text of AB 846 is available at http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/bill/03-04/asm/ab_0801-0850/ab_0846_bill_20030908922_chaptered.pdf

The Tobacco Prevention and Education Program surveyed public buildings in Santa Clara County, including city, county and state buildings, and found that about 100 buildings did not have appropriate "No Smoking" signage.

TPEP developed three "No Smoking" metallic signs in English, Spanish and Vietnamese that can be posted outside public buildings. TPEP also contacted the facilities managers who oversee 100 Santa Clara County public buildings and then conducted a 30-minute training explaining AB 846. After the training TPEP staff distributed the metallic signs. From two weeks to three months later, 75% of the facilities managers received a follow up call to determine if the "no smoking" signs were posted. More than 80% of the facilities had put the signs up.

As a result of this intervention, more than 120 public buildings in Santa Clara County have a "No Smoking" sign on the front door or on the main entrance. Ashtrays were also moved 20 feet from front doors.

TPEP conducted two surveys: one with facilities managers and one with the general public found near a public building with the appropriate No Smoking signage. The survey for the facilities managers measured if the training was effective and helpful. The survey to the general public measured their knowledge about the law.

Results from the survey for the facilities manager revealed that 100% of facilities managers knew about AB 846 and were compliant with the law. Results from the general public survey revealed that 92% of all participants knew that there is a law that prohibits smoking within 20 feet of a main entrance, exit, and operable window of all buildings. Additionally, 95% of all participants also knew that there is a law prohibiting smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces.

Communities in Santa Clara County that have enacted outdoors-smoking restrictions have shown improved compliance with the presence and observance of signage.

Overall, the TPEP project was very effective. Currently “No Smoking” signs are on the majority of the public buildings in Santa Clara County. For more information regarding secondhand smoking or Assembly Bill 846, please contact the Santa Clara County Tobacco Prevention and Education Program at (408) 494-7447.